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Shoshana Zuboff
Information industry's Silent Spring
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David Swanson

is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is executive director of WorldBeyondWar.org and campaign coordinator for RootsAction.org. Swanson's books include *War Is A Lie* and *When the World Outlawed War*. He blogs at DavidSwanson.org and WarIsACrime.org, and hosts Talk Nation Radio. He is a 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee.

Swanson was awarded the 2018 Peace Prize by the U.S. Peace Memorial Foundation.



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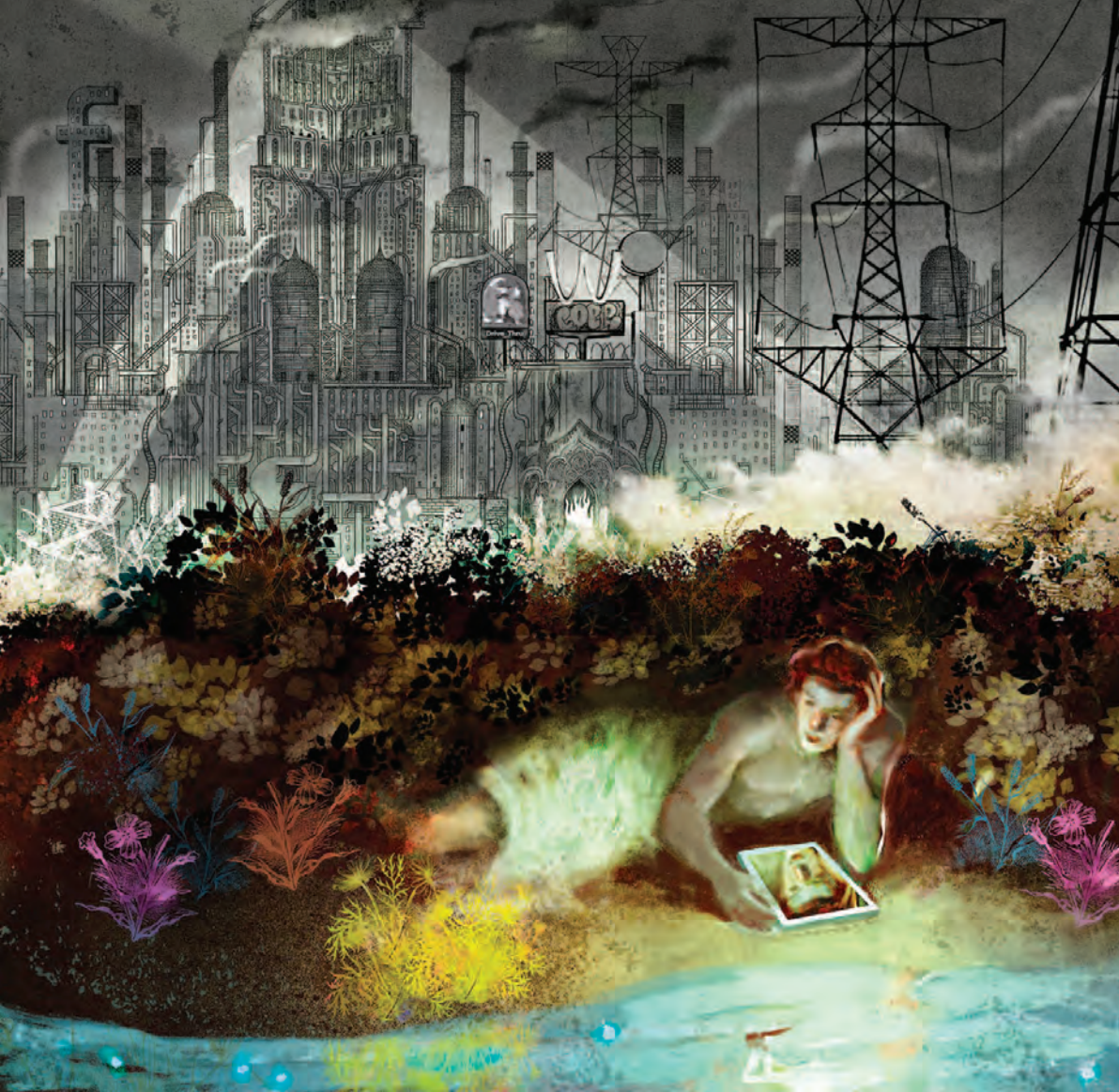
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When we think about capitalism in the 19th and 20th centuries, the titanic struggles of those eras, of that industrial era, was the struggle between capital and labor. The power of capital bore down on us as workers, as employees in our economic roles, in the economic domain, in factories, in offices. Something different is happening now. The titanic struggles of capital today have washed over the walls of the factories and the offices, at least those that are left. They've surpassed the economic domain. They have flooded the whole space that we think of as the social, society. They bear down on each one of us, not because of a specific economic role that we play but simply because we are here living our lives, this is our time. These forces bear down on our bodies, on our homes, in our cars, in our cities. They know our tears, they know our bloodstream, they know our pancreas, they know our conversations, they know our emotions, they know our personalities. They know our futures.

And yet what are we called? We don't have a name. We are not workers, we are not laborers. We don't have a name. The only name we have is the name that they

gave us – users. This is not okay. What I'm learning and maybe you will learn this with me, maybe you disagree, but what I'm learning is that what these words, in different countries and different cities and across different generations, are expressing are the social, political, psychological, and economic interests that are emerging for us in our new experience in a new era of capital that is no longer confined to the economic domain..

Let me give you an analogy. In the 1830s, the first third of the 19th century, in Britain, where industrial capitalism was slowly taking form, slowly emerging as a new kind of capitalism, there were two words for the social classes. If you looked at the whole social hierarchy, there were only two labels: one was aristocracy and the other was the lower classes. Everyone who wasn't aristocratic was grouped into this big *mélange*, the lower classes. That included everyone from bankers and merchants to paupers. Everyone was just part of the lower classes.

There's a very specific and interesting history of how the conditions of industrial capitalism took hold and the factories emerged and the new forms of work and the new forms of economic oppression. And under the pressure of those new forms a new consciousness was born, and the

Surveillance capitalism

by Shoshana Zuboff

art by Anthony Freda, anthonyfreda.com



Taking of private experience for translation into data, had to be secret. It was designed to keep us users in ignorance.

idea of the laborer emerged. It wasn't already given; it emerged out of a felt recognition of shared interests that were new in the world. That felt recognition, that new consciousness became the basis for the new forms of collective action that eventually mobilized the emergence of democracies in our societies and eventually formed the basis of power that tethered industrial capitalism to the interests of society and to the requirements of democracy and to democratic values and principles, such that over the decades, and indeed well into the 20th century, we could talk about something like a market democracy and we could experience some kind of equilibrium in which capitalism and its raw excesses were tethered to the needs of people and society and democracy.

I wonder if this is our time now to emerge from this amorphous nonentity of "users," which is a word that says we don't matter and we have no interests, as we through these words – anxiety, manipulation, control, freedom, democracy, resistance, rebellion, solution – begin to identify our true interests, and through that, discover the new forms of collective action. It won't be the solutions of the 20th or the 19th century, but there will be new forms of collective action and collaborative action that bind us and that allow us to compel and harness the resources of our democratic institutions to restrain, interrupt, and even outlaw the raw excesses of a rogue mutation of capitalism that I call "surveillance capitalism", which is now illegitimately claiming a dominant role in our democracy, our society, and indeed in our lives.

I'm going to say a couple of words just sort of introducing the basics of surveillance capitalism, a little Surveillance Capitalism 101. I define surveillance capitalism this way. Surveillance capitalism departs in many respects from the history of market capitalism, but in this respect it mirrors that history. People have long discussed the way in which capitalism evolves by claiming things that have their own life outside of the market dynamic and bringing them into the market dynamic so that they can be turned into commodities for sale and purchase. So famously, for example, industrial capitalism claimed nature. Nature lives its own life: the *continued p.5...*

common ground

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Cover image: Lightsource

Bells for Peace for Atomic Bombing of Japan

On August 6th and 9th, you are invited to participate in the Bells for Peace campaign remembering the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan. Bells of all kinds and cultures will sound 75 times all around the world in churches, temples, cathedrals, meditation centres, community halls, fire halls, public plazas, private homes, parliament building in every country on Earth honouring those who perished. During the 2020 Summer Olympic in Japan, we foresee the world mindfully ring bells to end the nuclear arms race forever.

Seventy four years ago two nuclear bombs obliterated the vibrant cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some died instantly, vaporized in the fire ball, others died shortly after, others met their demise fighting the ravages of radiation sickness or lingering death from cancer. Families were torn asunder, and the reality of the human species facing extinction became shockingly clear. We must never let this happen again. Let us cooperate between all cultures, religion and countries to honour the sacred task of pulling humanity back from the brink of atomic destruction. We start now.

Let's ring the Bells for Peace together regardless of poli-

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tics or weather. We now live in a time of thousands more nuclear weapons, and at a time when the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) talks see the two bombs that fell in August 1945 as too small to be considered in super-power SALT negotiations. The world has gone unconscious of this insane threat to the peril of life itself.

Our lovely planet Earth is the common ground which we all stand upon. Let no child, nor our collective future be threatened by such massive abhorrent weapons.

Vancouver walked for peace in 1982. Now it is time to ring the Bells for Peace world-wide and bring in world beyond war that is safe for all future children. Find out more, get involved. It is up to us to make it happen. There is no way to peace, peace is the way.

— Joseph Roberts, publisher, *Common Ground*

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forests and the meadows and the waters of the rivers, the oceans, the mountains, its own life. Now claimed by industrial capitalism for the market dynamic to be reborn as real estate, as land to be sold and purchased. Famously, industrial capitalism claimed work, the kinds of things that people did in their fields, in their cottages, in their homes, in their gardens, for the market dynamic to be reborn as labor – labor that could have a price attached to it, wage labor to be sold and purchased.

Surveillance capitalism follows in this tradition by claiming private human experience as a source of free, raw material for subordination to the market dynamic, where it is reborn as behavioral data. These behavioral data are then combined with world historic computational capabilities that we generally refer to as things like machine intelligence, machine learning, artificial intelligence. Really the labels are secondary to the thing. But these are computational capabilities that have never before existed.

The combination of behavioral data and world historic computation capabilities are aimed at one goal, and that is to produce predictions of human behavior, what we will do now, soon, and later. These predictions – think of them as prediction products – are then sold in a new kind of marketplace in which business customers, not us, business customers, have an interest in betting on our future. And it is business customers who are now vying to lay their bets on these predictions, to purchase these prediction products to know our futures. So these are markets in behavioral futures. Just like we have markets in pork belly futures and oil futures, these are markets in behavioral futures, which is why I call on them behavioral futures markets.

This may seem sort of weird and science-fictiony and whatever, but really it's just a tiny stroke of the dial of abstraction on what has become commonplace in our lives. That starts with online targeted advertising. This logic was pretty much invented at Google. Like with mass production, there were pieces, elements of it that were out and about, but it really all came together at Google in 2001 under the heat of financial emergency in the dot-com bubble bursting. In the same way that mass production, elements of that, had been around in the armories and the Singer sewing machine and various things, but they really all came together at the Ford Motor Company at a certain place in time under the heat of Ford's own financial emergency, having gone bankrupt twice and now really trying to make it work the third time.

When we think about what was invented there – I'm not going to go into all the details, because it will run through too much time – essentially what is it that happened? They figured out that they could take data that they were not using to actually improve their products and services – stuff that was sitting around in data logs that at that time was called waste, it was called data exhaust, it was called digital bread crumbs, it was collateral left-over stuff from search and so forth behavior – and that it had great predictive power, discovered that they could put that together with their even then considerable computational capabilities, and that with that they could produce a prediction of a piece of future behavior.

In this case, that future behavior was pretty specific. It was a click-through. But that's a future behavior.

And what those online targeted ad folks were doing, they were buying these predictions of future behavior. And the way it happened was Google said: Look, you used to pick the keywords, you used to decide where your ads were going to go. You're not going to do that anymore. We're going to use this special computational capability and our proprietary data. We're going to tell you the result, we're going to tell you where to put your ad. And if you just follow along, you will make money. At first they didn't want to do that because they didn't like the black box idea: We want to know what's going on, we want to pick. But eventually they agreed and they went with the black box and they picked the computational result, the prediction product, that came out of these analyses. Lo and behold, Google made money.



**Pokémon GO, for example,
as an experimental dry run at
population-level herding. The
skills of herding populations in
ways that are strictly maintained
to bypass the awareness of
individuals in order to nevertheless
herd them along the lines and
toward the spaces and places
where guaranteed commercial
outcomes will be fulfilled.**

Very interesting to note, between that moment of financial emergency, say, in the year 2000, Google's revenues were about \$86 million. When it IPO'd in 2004 and the fruit of these activities first became known to the world, we saw that their revenue line increased by 3,590 percent.

That's on the strength of a new economic logic that depended upon the social relations of the one-way mirror. Because they quickly understood that in order to find these very predictive data, they not only could scrape them from their data logs, but they could go hunt them in all kinds of online environments. They were very explicit about seeing that they could hunt and take outside of people's awareness, because they knew even then that asking would not be a profitable undertaking. So from the start, all of this, the taking of private experience for translation into data, had to be secret. It was designed to keep us users in ignorance. And over the years that has proved to be extremely successful, that our ignorance has been their bliss.

Ergo, surveillance capitalism.

I spent seven years literally locked away writing this book, and the thing that really guided me on this was my feeling for my children's future. Seeing into my children's future and being afraid of what I saw was a real big motivator for me. But I'm not naturally a very selfish person, so it's a very quick step from there to being worried about everybody's children and all the young people that I know and all the young people that I meet. These are two paragraphs that I wrote for my children and all the young people that I meet when I'm teaching when I'm on the road. These are things I want either you to know to tell your children or, if you are one of the children in the room, I want you to know this in your heart. That's why I'm reading this right now. This is way at the end of the book.

"When I speak to my children or an audience of young people, I try to alert them to the historically contingent nature of the thing that has us by calling attention to ordinary values and expectations before surveillance capitalism began its campaign of psychic numbing. It is not OK to have to hide in your own life. It is not normal, I tell them. It is not OK to spend your lunchtime conversations comparing software that will camouflage you and protect you from unwanted, continuous invasion: "5 trackers blocked," "4 trackers blocked," "59 trackers blocked," facial features scrambled, voice disguised.

"I tell them that the word 'search' has meant a daring existential journey, not a fingertip to already existing answers; that friend is an embodied mystery that can be forged only face to face and heart to heart; and that recognition is the glimmer of homecoming we experience in our beloved's face, not facial recognition. I say that it is not OK to have our best instincts for connection, empathy, and information exploited by a draconian *quid pro quo* that holds these goods hostage to the pervasive strip search of our lives. It is not okay for every moving, emotion, utterance, and desire to be catalogued, manipulated, and then used to surreptitiously herd us through the future tense for the sake of someone else's profit. These things are brand-new, I tell them, they are unprecedented. You should not take them for granted, because they are not OK.

"If democracy is to be replenished in the coming decades, it is up to us to rekindle the sense of outrage and loss over what is being taken from us. In this I do not mean only our personal information. What is at stake here is the human expectation of sovereignty over one's own life and authorship of one's own experience. What is at stake is the inward experiences from which we form the will to will and the public spaces to act on that will. What is at stake is the dominant principle of social ordering in an information civilization and our rights as individuals and societies to answer the questions who knows, who decides, who decides who decides.

So if we are coming up with the same words in different countries and different cities, across generations and across societies, isn't this really about the beginning of an information civilization that we are all participants in? And isn't this really the beginning of the contest of what kind of civilization it will be, what will be its moral milieu, what will be its values, *continued p.9...*

Vancouver under the influence

The same outside influences established under the former Vision-dominated council continue to drive Vancouver city policy.

by Elizabeth Murphy

The results of the last civic election in October 2018 were a clear signal that the public wanted change, but what started out with so much hope has given us more of the same. The Vision dominated council was eliminated but their policies continue. Campaign finance reform has not removed the influences of the big money unions and developers, while the old Vision-appointed staff continue to guide the process.

The recent launch of the City-wide Plan is a case in point. The outline of the four year planning process was publicly posted only days before it went to council – with no prior public input. At the time of writing, the council decision was delayed, but the proposed planning direction was clear.

As outlined, the planning process is little more than a data-mining exercise while continuing the policies and programs established by Vision. Things are going in this direction because the same background influences driving the previous council are still in play, despite many good intentions to change this.

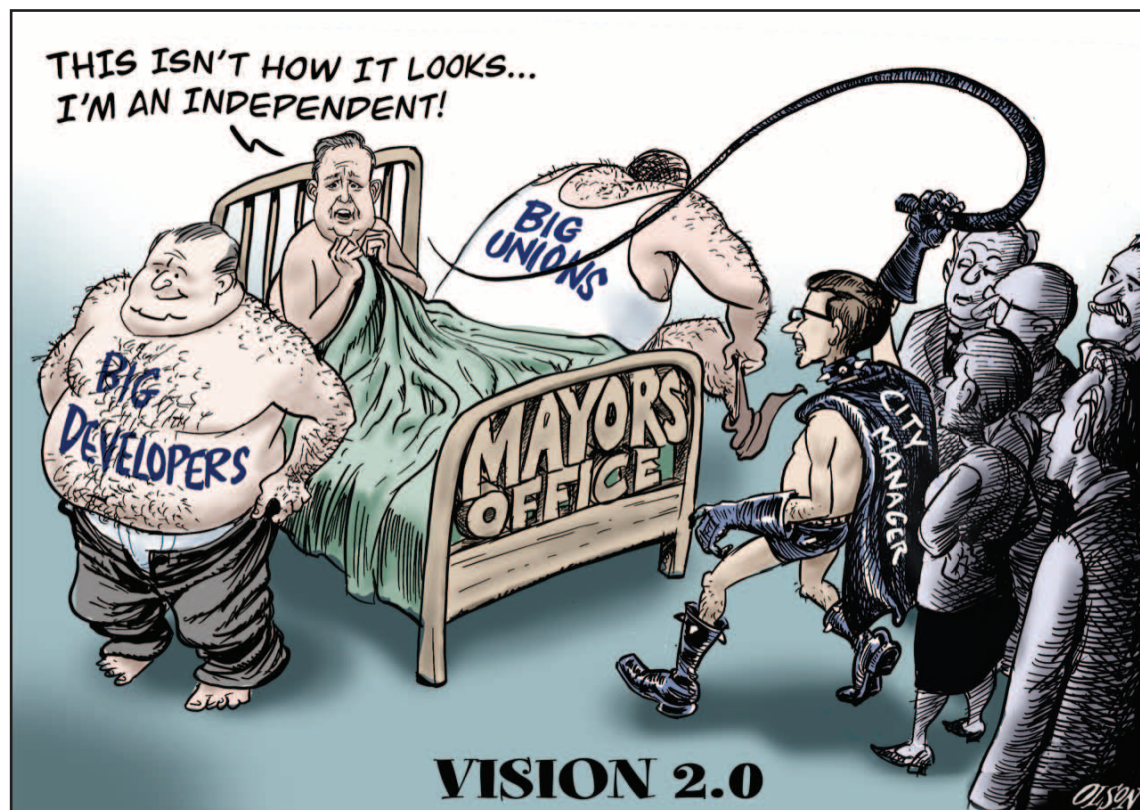
Although Mayor Kennedy Stewart ran as an independent, as a former federal NDP Member of Parliament he came with party ties and endorsement from the Vancouver and District Labour Council (VDLC).

Provincial campaign reform did not include adequate third-party restrictions for municipal elections, essentially creating the equivalent of US-style “super-PACs” that do not have to disclose political funding outside of the six week election period.



What is needed is neighbourhood-based growth management for the people who live and work in the city, rather than the promotion and implementation of growth for vested interests well beyond our boundaries.

The influence of the development industry continues as well. Stewart has had a series of ten meetings with former councillor Raymond Louie and the major developers he is advocating for. These include Ian Gillespie of Westbank Projects Corporation, Bruno and Peter Wall of Wall Financial Corporation, and Brian McCauley of Concert Properties. Stewart also had lunch with



Bob Rennie and met with Ryan Beedie of Beedie Development Group.

Similar to former mayor Gregor Robertson, Mayor Stewart recently cited how the city is working with their developer “partners” on building new rentals. He then voted down a motion to protect existing rentals in commercial zones to discourage displacement through demolition.

Although Mayor Stewart doesn’t have a council majority, the Vision-appointed (largely American) senior staff guide the new council to continue with old policies.

The procedure bylaw and code of conduct rules are used to muzzle individual councillors, advisory committees, and even the public. Criticism of how city staff interprets the narrative, data, analysis, assumptions or intentions of city policy are met with hostility, censorship and reprimands that closes down full discussion.

While individual councillors must provide notice of their motions and submissions for comments from staff two weeks in advance, staff continue to bring major policy reports to council with little more than two or three business days allowed for the public and council to respond. The City-wide Plan is no different. It proposes major zoning changes throughout the city without any advanced input on the process from the public.

Rather than city residents determining the future direction of their community, city staff are driving changes to Vancouver that will be transformational rather than incremental. This is regardless of the fact that realistic provisions for growth would not require this. The city already has an enormous amount of zoned capacity – even when only counting the sites likely to be developed or in the pipeline – and has enough to meet actual growth projections well past 2040. The city is aiming for 72,000 units from 2017 to 2027, yet based on census data, only 26,000 units are justified. So the city is setting highly inflated growth targets.

As more new development is approved, more displacement occurs as affordable older housing stock is demolished and replaced with expensive new construction.

The City-wide Plan is also proposed to be coordinated and aligned with areas outside of Vancouver, including the whole region extending as far as Seattle and Portland in the United States.

Instead, what is needed is neighbourhood-based growth management for the people who live and work in the city, rather than the promotion and implementation of growth for vested interests well beyond our boundaries.

For any community planning process there is, typically, an interim rezoning policy to prevent spot rezoning

or changes outside of the planning process prior to the completion of the plan. This prevents setting development precedents beyond current zoning. The City-wide plan doesn't have this.

So the Broadway corridor land use plan continues to be implemented from Clark Drive to Vine Street, and 16th Avenue to 1st Avenue. It crosses multiple neighbourhoods that are broken up into sub-areas, that do not fully follow historic neighbourhood boundaries and are not part of the City-wide Plan. If a subway is extended to UBC, the Broadway corridor is proposed to include all of Kitsilano and West Point Grey as well.

The Broadway corridor continues the strategy of the Cambie corridor that imposed a subway land use typology that excluded neighbourhood-based context planning.

The current rental bonus density programs will continue while the City-wide Plan process is underway. This includes the pilot program that has tower spot rezonings that will set large scale building precedents. One example is the project at Broadway and Birch Street at the old Denny's site. Since this is in the heart of Central Broadway, a 16 storey tower was previously approved. Under the rental pilot it is now proposed to go to 28 storeys with a floor space ratio of 10.52 – far beyond what is currently allowed in the area.

Another example is at developer Wesgroup's site at Broadway and Alma Street. An application was originally submitted for a six storey market rental project a few years ago, and now is coming back with a new proposal under the pilot project for 14 storeys and 5.8 floor space ratio, setting a new precedent for the surrounding area of Kitsilano and West Point Grey that currently is mostly under four storeys. With staggered floors and orange in colour, it maximizes the impact.

These kinds of blockbusting projects are just the start, especially where corridor planning is implemented without neighbourhood context while setting development precedents that supercede the City-wide Plan. The city should be pressing pause on current policies set by the previous council to allow for a new direction. info@elizabethmurphy.ca

Elizabeth Murphy is a private-sector project manager and was formerly a property development officer for the City of Vancouver and B.C. Housing.

Victory Gardening the ultimate rebellion

by Bruce Mason

Awakened people wonder what individual actions will most impact the climate change ecocide that is killing life on our planet. We take tiny, solitary steps with our own carefully reduced carbon footprints. We march in protest with growing anger, and in growing numbers that include futureless children. But too often we give in to rampant, short-sighted despair. And rightly so, since whatever individuals do at this very late date seems utterly inadequate to the challenge of our wide awake, nightmare reality.

However in our hands, hearts and soil, we all hold our great re-awakening and best hope.

It's simple. Natural. We did it for 7 thousand years as a basic daily act of survival. And now, once again, we must garden as if our lives, our families and democracy depend on it. Because they most likely do.

We've been warned it will take collective effort equal to, or greater than, World War II to turn our grave existential threat around. Then as now, the Victory Garden is a powerful weapon. Even the ever Johnny-come-lately United States produced 40 percent of its wartime food from individual gardens.

It now turns out that the ultimate act of rebellion is to feed yourself. Gardening is the most direct, possibly only, way to dismantle the whole top-down system. Growing your own vegetables keeps your money away from big business which, with corrupt politicians and media, created and perpetuate this unprecedented mess. If they can't make you a slave for your own food, they have far less leverage to own you.

In fact, Thomas Jefferson believed that true democracy requires 20 percent of citizens to be self-sufficient. This enables them to be real dissenters, free to voice opinions and beliefs, without obligation to those who would threaten their survival.

Too many of us put our faith and fate in unknown technology, forgetting that growing food comprises the original solar technology. Plants use the energy of sunlight, and through the process of photosynthesis, capture carbon dioxide (CO2) from the air and release oxygen.

We have been conned into believing more food can be produced with less effort with the addition of fossil-fuel-driven machinery, lots of nitrogen fertilizer, and deadly chemical pesticides. The result: one calorie of food energy in a typical diet requires 10 calories of fossil-fuel energy to plant, grow and bring to your table. The way we currently feed ourselves – or enable ourselves to be fed – accounts for one-fifth of the green-

house gas for which each of us is responsible.

Where to start? Plant a tree. Everyone can do it and scientists now say that may save us. Forest restoration can buy time for us to cut our carbon emissions, and is the best climate change solution available. And Canada is one of six countries – with Russia, the US, Australia, Brazil and China – with the most potential, because so much of our once-existing precious forests, home to million of rapidly disappearing species, have been removed.

A tree is a start, one part of the New Victory Garden revolution to transform and deepen our connection to nature, which we have lost at our peril. But when push comes to shove, food comes first and everyone has the right to feed themselves and their family.

Time to protest by picking up shovels and hoes – and gardening. There are a plethora of how-to guides to get you going.

The idea is to find one thing to do in your life that doesn't involve spending or voting. Your garden – whatever size –

may not rock the world or go viral. But it will be real, particular, symbolic, inspiring, and offer enormous, endless rewards.

Gardening teaches that our relationship to the planet need not be zero-sum, and that as long as the sun shines, as long as people plan, plant, think and do, if we bother to try, we can find ways to provide for ourselves without diminishing our lives and the world.

It's virtually impossible to despair with your hands working in soil, or while biting into a sun warmed tomato. Reduce your carbon footprint, sure, but just as importantly, shrink your dependence.

Wendell Berry wrote: "Once our personal connection to what is wrong becomes clear, then we have to choose: we can go on as before, recognizing our dishonesty and living with it the best we can, or we can begin the effort to change the way we think and live."

Overgrow the system by planting a tree and your own vision of a Victory Garden. Produce rather consume. It's the antidote to despair, something you can count on to nourish and heal. info@elizabethmurphy.ca

Bruce Mason is a former head-writer for the *Vancouver Show*, a *Province* newspaper columnist, national radio executive producer, communications officer at SFU and UBC, and author of the book, *"Our Clinic: Visionary Health Care, Fundraising and and Community Building on Gabriola Island."*



Space ain't the place

We have to deal with our crap in the here and now

by Geoff Olson

Earth First! We'll wreck the other planets later
— bumper sticker

The respected Icelandic urban critic Ffeog Noslo is no Pollyanna. He insists that the invention of agriculture was something of a disaster for human beings: “It introduced a host of new ailments and problems through sedentary living, including the messy matter of waste disposal in urban environments,” he observes in his magisterial 2016 study, *Where Do We Stick Our Shit? An Unnatural History of Civilization, Waste, and Entropy*.

For centuries, there was enough of an “outside” to get rid of fecal matter and other waste products without ecological backlash rearing its ugly head, even though pre-20th century cities of the west were defined more by filth than wealth. With the industrial revolution came the miracle of urban sanitation (the arts and sciences of moving your shit away from you), which lowered mortality rates and energized population growth.

We got so good at moving shit away from us, we scaled it up to nation-state levels, says Noslo: “The First World has largely imported order - in the form of infrastructure, highly subsidized agribusiness, and all the bric-a-brac of hypercapitalism, by exporting disorder to the Third World. This has been done by shipping everything from electronic waste to poison-pill debt arrangements their way, all under the pretext of economic opportunity and philanthropic beneficence, while shipping back capital in the form of cheap resources. It’s always been the same old hypocritical crap, from the Dutch East India Company to The International Monetary Fund.”

Okay, there’s no such book and no such Ffeog Noslo. But it’s one I’d like to write: how in an effort to manage our affairs, we humans rationalize or disguise shitty collective behaviour toward our own kind and other planetary citizens — from honeybees to orangutans — undoing planetary life support mecha-



nisms in the process.

Therein lies a story. One chilly San Franciscan night in 1966, writer Stewart Brand traipsed to the rooftop of his North Beach apartment building and dropped a small dose of acid. Wrapped in a blanket, and under the influence, it seemed to Brand that the streets of the city weren’t running parallel, but curving inward. It occurred to him that we tend to think of the Earth as flat, infinite in extent, and as a result regard its resources as endlessly renewable. “The relationship to infinity is to use it up,” he told author Michael Pollan, “but a round earth was a finite spaceship you had to manage carefully.”

Coming down, Brand wondered how

to convey this core truth effectively to others. Why hadn’t anyone ever seen a picture of Earth from space? Obsessed with this question, he petitioned NASA to take Earth’s portrait. It’s unknown if it’s the direct result of his campaign, but two years later Apollo astronauts trained a camera on Earth from the moon and supplied us with the first image of our home from space.

Christened “Spaceship Earth,” the shot became the iconic image of the first Earth Day in April, 1970, and visual shorthand for the co-dependency of the planet’s living beings. A big ball of rock and water where there is no “outside,” with planetary resources recycled on a

thin shell of life only a few miles thick.

It’s a long way from Brand’s sixties-era “aha” moment to the fever dreams of today’s billionaire investors, who believe shareholder salvation awaits in outer space. As the Earth proceeds along the arc of the Anthropocene toward uninhabitability, guys with deep pocket and big rockets hallucinate interplanetary space as the new Jamestown, with pilgrim astronauts staking claims for Hairless Primates in Orbit.

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos is eyeing the moon for colonization, and projects a time when a trillion humans, presumably all Amazon Plus members, live throughout the solar system in orbiting pods. For his part, SpaceX CEO Elon Musk is eyeing Mars for colonization.



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You may recall the 2015 film “The Martian,” in which Matt Damon’s abandoned astronaut farmer desperately claws at the Red planet’s rocky surface, trying to get it to cough up potatoes. I won’t get into all the theoretical problems with off-earth habitation, but there is one real-world parable to cite: the attempt three decades ago to recreate Earth’s living conditions in a self-sustaining, enclosed environment in a three hectare sealed environment in the Arizona desert. This brave and brilliant experiment, called “Biosphere 2,” encompassed a miniature

rain forest, a mangrove swamp, and coral reef. But by the early nineties it had ran afoul not just of unpleasant ecological surprises (cockroaches), but of interpersonal politics between the eight crew members. And this was an experiment on *Earth*.

Imagine trying to get a “Biosphere 3” going on the surface of Mars. A small group of astronauts, on a mission that takes seven months to arrive on a planet they can likely never return from, are less likely to die from a shortage of potatoes than their own company.

Yet let’s imagine such first-wave colonization of Mars is successful, and the descendants of subsequent arrivals are able to survive – even thrive – on a planet terraformed into a chilly semblance of Earth. Without some enforced birth limits, within a few dozen generations the Martians would start straining what little resources the planet has to offer. And the pernicious Malthusian problem humans have now on Earth would return to bite these Martians in the ass.

By the way, let’s not forget that the greatest discoveries about our solar system were made by spindly unmanned craft, at a bare fraction of the costs of manned missions (I’m lookin’ at you, Voyager 1 and 2). So the latter are hardly about expanding the frontiers of knowledge.

Stewart Brand went on to introduce the *Whole Earth Catalogue*, the hippy-era bible of DIY technology and sustainable systems (it’s first issue featured the Apollo shot of Earth from space). His stoned musing about a limited planet is now a 1st grade given, with Earth’s portrait its cheery, science class avatar. Yet the mythic American trope, of motoring off to elsewhere and leaving your crappy past in the rear view mirror, dies hard. In it’s new inflection, arrested adolescents with too much money are prepared to hit the interplanetary road Kerouac-style, ejecting booster rockets like beer cans.

The ultimate sell: newly minted astronauts from the equestrian class will be spared an ugly fate on an overheated, resource-strapped planet by throwing themselves into orbit, before the planet’s population peaks at 11 billion (the premise of another Matt Damon film, “Elysium,” by the way).

Yet the operative term here is “Spaceship Earth”. How the flying fuselage do you beat a 13000 km-wide craft on a fixed solar orbit in the “Goldilocks zone,” with a biosphere regulated by trillions of organisms, and shielded from cosmic rays by an internally-generated geomagnetic field? Short answer: you can’t. We are sure to trash other less-agreeable worlds like they’re Motley Crüe hotel rooms, if we persist in doing a Nikki Sixx here.

As Ffeog Noslo didn’t write, “If we attempt to populate nearby worlds while allowing trophic collapse to proceed on Earth, then we have to ask what our gleaming spaceships actually represent to the cosmos. Are

they seeds of life or vectors of infection? For there are no places left to stick our shit, much less outer space.” ☞

Geoff Olson is a Vancouver-based journalist and political cartoonist. mwiseguise@yahoo.com



...*Surveillance* from pg. 5

what will be its balance of knowledge and power. Who knows? Who decides? Who decides who decides?”

Early on the Google founders understood that human experience was the new virgin wood. They understood it would be the thing that could be claimed and monetized. And they understood that it would be very cheap to do so, not only in the online environment but out in the real world, where devices, sensors, cameras, blah, blah, blah, all of the digital infrastructure, all the saturation of digital architecture that now surrounds us would be both ubiquitous and extremely cheap. This was a vision early on.

It is certainly a vision of unilateral dispossession. I write about the many, many, dispossession strategies that were honed over time, including when they were challenged, which is something that’s going on right now with Facebook. We’re seeing what I call the stages of the dispossession cycle unfold – incursion, habituation, adaptation, redirection – stages that they go through to cope with how to institutionalize the dispossession and how to demobilize the resistance that is offered to it, as is being offered now, like, Okay, no more pictures of self-harm on Instagram. Adaptation. Anyway, it’s all there.



“In almost all of our work, we have to answer hard questions about what we believe,” he wrote in his memo. “We have to justify the metrics and make sure they aren’t losing out on a bigger picture. But connecting people. That’s our imperative. Because that’s what we do. We connect people.”

When it comes to surveillance capitalism, to get into the global exploitation, I’ve tried to isolate some of the economic imperatives at work here, because in order for prediction – competition in surveillance capitalism revolves around predicting the future. So surveillance capitalists are competing on who’s got the best predictions. The best predictions approximate observation; the best prediction is one that is just like actually seeing the thing. You don’t have to predict it. It’s happening. These imperatives have become more dynamic and more pernicious over the last two decades.

Economies of scale. We need a lot of behavioral data, a lot of these surplus data to make good predictions. Economies of scope. We need different qualities of data. Now it’s got to come from your emotions, from

your face, from your voice, from where you run, from where you shop, from what you do in the city, from how you look for a parking space. And then ultimately from what I call economies of action. Economies of action means the very best, the choicest predictive data comes from actually intervening in the state of play and tuning behavior, herding behavior, shunting, manipulating behavior so that it moves in the direction of the outcomes that are aligned with our commercial objectives.



Early on the Google founders understood that human experience was the new virgin wood...that would be claimed and monetized.

I write about Pokémon GO, for example, as an experimental dry run at population-level herding. The skills of herding populations in ways that are strictly maintained to bypass the awareness of individuals in order to nevertheless herd them along the lines and toward the spaces and places where guaranteed commercial outcomes will be fulfilled. And that is, in the case of Pokémon GO, the establishments, the restaurants, the pizza joints, the bars, the service stations, the McDonald’s franchises, blah, blah, blah, that paid Pokémon GO, paid Niantic Labs, Google incubated, as you all know, probably, for footfall in exactly the same way that online targeted advertisers pay Google and Facebook and others for what, for click-through rights. So footfall in the real world is click-through in the online world.

Ultimately, the digital architecture over which we have all poured so much effort, into which we have placed so much hope, into which we have placed our dreams for an empowering and a democratizing information civilization, this digital architecture, which I call not Big Brother but Big Other, doesn’t really care about us at all. It really doesn’t care who you are or what you do. It doesn’t care if you are happy or sad. It doesn’t care if you are alt-right or alt-left. It really does not give a toss about you. All it cares about is that whoever you are and whatever you do, you do it in a way that it can get the data.

This is what I call radical indifference. There is an economic compulsion toward totality of data. This is what pushes it first from online to offline, across the offline, deep into our personalities, across our activities, and then across our homes, our cars, our cities, our regions, our countries, our societies, and our world. There are no boundaries to totality. The more behavioral data, the more prediction, the better the prediction, the more lucrative, the more powerful these behavioral futures markets.

An economic logic has been created and institutionalized on which huge market capitalization now rests. This economic logic has imperatives, and you can predict *continued p.17...*



Mac McLaughlin

ZODIAC

StarWise

July-August 2019

Okay kiddies, here's the scoop. This column covers July and August. In July, we have a solar and lunar eclipse to contend with. Then in August, Mercury stations itself right on the lunar eclipse degree. Hmmm, sounds a tad ominous. Eclipses have always struck fear into our collective psyche. As we all know, there are several eclipses every year and they pass without doing much harm to most of us. It's the same thing with all planetary phenomena, some of it will affect some people in the negative, and others may very well benefit from the same planetary alignment. It really depends on how the planets are affected in our personal birth horoscopes. Then again, there is such a thing as collective karma in which a whole nation can suffer through disastrous and calamitous events such as Chernobyl, major earthquakes, floods, etc.

The fact of the matter is that we are living and existing in a plane of duality – and specifically on Earth where there have always been wars, plagues, volcanoes, diseases, tsunamis, etc. It is that way, and will always be that way. But then one day we will move up into the more rarified, ethereal and spiritual planes of existence where there is more light, more love, and more peace. This life on Earth is the training ground where we learn to live, love and forgive, or create more karmic indebtedness ad infinitum, until we get it right and earn the right to pass into the higher realms of consciousness.

As the great mystics have taught us, we cannot change the past, and the future will never come – but we can live in successive moments of Now and make conscious decisions about how we will live and behave. Yes, there is the law of karma which is inexorable and unchangeable. There is also the law of mercy and grace and it supersedes all laws. So in essence there is always hope, there is always God's love and mercy, and for sure, for sure, we are on our way home high above the starry sky beyond countless suns, moons, galaxies, universes and other planes of existence.

As the great Master Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj has said, one day the world will be run by the Khalsa. Which means that it will be run by truly enlightened beings. We'll be able to relax, enjoy, love, serve, work hard, pray, meditate, give and forgive, feed the children, and help those that we can. And by the by, we'll get to our destination and true eternal home. Love one another right now.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.



ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

The July eclipses take place in your solar fourth and tenth houses, which relate to home, family and career activities. We think of family as kin folk but in reality we are all family, and it is your time to give your love and service to them. August bodes well. A time of fun and adventure.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

Communication, travel and an exceptionally demanding time comes up. There may be some hitches and glitches along the way, especially in the first half of July, and big changes may come your way. Family and real estate figure strongly in August and you may be pondering it all on a deep level.



GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

It's time to get your feet wet. Actually, just jump into the deep end of the pool. You will be busy, maybe too much so. Home, family, relationships, finances, and health all need to be looked at and squared up in July. August provides some fun, good times and relief with friends and family.



CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

The karma gods are hard at work dreaming up all kinds of scenarios that will manifest through July and August. Just before you dive under the bed, know that whatever takes place will be significant and very important, and must be dealt with. You may be doing the happy dance when you come out the other side.



LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

We often forget that whatever comes our way was designed by our own hand in previous lifetimes. The past comes up and meets the present in July and August. The first half of July will be intensive to say the least. Big changes are in the wind. Love and matters of the heart take precedence.



VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

It's time to get out and about. Round up the crew, and enjoy times with friends and family. August isn't a cake walk, and a lot is going on behind the scene. Take time to share time with those that need your love and support. Take care of your health, and it will take care of you.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

You're heading out. Long and short journeys are indicated. Even if you don't leave the roost you will be journeying anyway. One way or the other it is time to broaden your horizons, and expand your consciousness. Career and family changes are in the wind. Great exchanges take place with friends new and old.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Always curious, and always seeking and searching, now is the time to scratch that itch. Travel is indicated, and it might be career-related. You won't be bored, but you may be floored with all that comes your way in July and August. Controversies rage, and you may have to defend your position strongly.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Mysteries deepen, and you may say goodbye to someone you held dear and near. Secrets, inheritances, rules of law, and all kinds of unusual scenarios come up. News comes from afar, and you may go afar. Regardless of what takes place, keep applying yourself to the tasks at hand. The stars are leaning in your favour.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Everything is stirred up in the July time, signaling that it is high time for important changes to take place. Nothing comes your way that wasn't deserved or earned somewhere in the hoary past. Patience, fortitude, faith, compassion and love bring you to the distant shore safely. Let, go, and let God.



AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

Get your ducks lined up, and get things organized as best that you can. First get out of the tub and dry off the ducks. (Oh, I love Aquarians, they're quirky as can be.) August is another story: get your shoulder pads and helmet on, and make ready to do battle. When the smoke clears, a new reality sets in.



PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

God saved his best for last. Yep that's you. You have the wisdom of the other eleven signs combined within you. You just need to learn how to tap into it. Don't be too flustered with things you cannot control. Just know that it's all coming down according to God's will.

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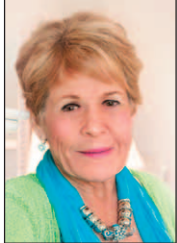
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Universe Within Gwen Randall-Young

PSYCHOLOGY

Practical soulfulness

It is increasingly common to talk of the soul in relation to personal partnerships: terms like “soul mates” or “soul connections” describe the presence of a deeper part of our being in such relationships. At the soul level, there seems to be an intrinsic knowing, and all-at-once understanding. It is almost a holographic experience, wherein a few words reveal the full essence of another to us. Moreover, in that place of soul consciousness, it seems that we have a magical window into the entire Universe. We sense oneness almost as though the Universe lives within us. It just might. Connectedness is inherent in all things, and only our limited vision prevents us from seeing that.

Soul consciousness is not limited to the realms of love and creativity. It is in every aspect of our lives. In personal relationships, we see how we mirror one other. We understand the themes played out between generations, or when moving from one relationship to the next. We often don’t think of business relationships in the same way, treating them as somehow separate. Yet the deeper consequences of our actions affect our personal and business associations equally.

The soul is the seat of our higher consciousness, our deep wisdom. It carries the knowledge of the eons, and one of the purposes of our learning on Earth is to align our personalities, thoughts and actions to that clear note of truth. Every word, decision, or action is an opportunity to strive for that alignment. To achieve this, we must tune in to our own souls. If our behaviors leave us feeling dishonest, then we are not honouring our souls, or the souls of others, and are moving farther from our true path. If our behaviours make us feel at peace, and good about the energy we put out into the world, then we are moving closer to that path.

Integrity is the key word. If we take advantage of, or create hardship for others, those actions lack integrity. If our product or service damages the environment, and we choose to ignore that, we again lack integrity. If we see people only as “prospects” or “potential sales,” we miss incredible opportunities for strengthening our earthly connection to soul. Every person in one’s life is significant from the soul’s perspective. Each person provides an opportunity for us to act through our highest self and somehow enrich *their* experience on Earth.

Business relationships were originally meant to be cooperative. Two could create more than one and those who had abundance could help those who didn’t. Each could contribute in their own way. Jonas Salk wrote about the survival of the *wisest*. In 1976 he anticipated the need for a change in the prevailing values – away from domination and competition and towards partnership and mutual benefit.

As a species we are evolving, and positive evolution is like a *growing up*. Aligning with the wisdom of the soul leads us away from self-centeredness and toward compassion for others. We learn to see all souls as equal, regardless of earthly position. We understand that our business dealings are secondary to what is happening at our soul level, and at the interpersonal level.

We are also challenged to assess whether our work honors our soul. If it is not nourishing, then misalignment is felt between body, mind and soul. It manifests as stress or even illness. It should not be surprising that many very successful businessmen succumb to heart attacks. Perhaps the heart and soul are refusing to follow an unhealthy path without putting up a fight.

Integrity means honesty and sincerity. Its root is “integral”, which means essential, complete, whole. Honoring soul in business means not only acting openly and honestly, but ensuring that we look carefully at the essence and implications of all that we do. It requires honoring the beautiful spirit of wholeness, of oneness, which is the basis of the Universe. 

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. To read more articles, order books or listen to audio recordings, visit www.gwen.ca, or follow her on Facebook.

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Independent Media Marie Aspiazu

MEDIA

Stronger wireless regulations needed

British Columbians, and Canadians in general, have been price-gouged and misled by cell phone providers for far too long. We continue to pay some of the highest prices for cell phone service in the industrialized world, and Big Telecom's misleading and aggressive sales tactics regularly make headlines.

Back in 2013, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) passed the Wireless Code of Conduct to help protect customers from Big Telecom's predatory practices and provide more clarity around cell phone contracts. However, loopholes and weak enforcement mechanisms have left the door open for customer abuse – from surprise cell phone bills in the thousands of dollars to the continuation of device subsidy charges long after the customer paid the charges off.

Fortunately for British Columbians, the provincial government recently announced its intention to strengthen cell phone customer protection and improve

cell phone contract and billing transparency. To that end, the government launched a survey to gather people's experiences with their cell phone providers. The survey closed on July 5th.

The BC government initiative has the potential to introduce ground-breaking provincial legislation that would complement the federal Wireless Code of Conduct. It could bring about stronger enforcement mechanisms and penalties to keep Big Telecom in line.

But in order to make this happen, British Columbians needed the opportunity to make clear demands and put pressure on the government. So OpenMedia launched a petition (<https://act.openmedia.org/bc-cell-plans>) calling for specific measures to strengthen cell phone customer protection at the provincial level and ensure that British Columbians get a better deal when signing up for a cell phone plan. The petition asks for increased billing transparency, improved advertising and sales standards, and strong enforcement standards.

OpenMedia has also been invited to meet with gov-

ernment officials to present its views. We will be using this meeting to deliver the petition and bring our collective voice straight to key decision makers.

Provincial legislation to protect wireless customers isn't new. Quebec, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia have passed laws to better protect their constituents and close some of the loopholes found in the Wireless Code at the federal level. Ontario had such laws too, through its Wireless Services Agreements Act, but Doug Ford's government scrapped it with the passage of the unpopular Bill-66.

Now it's BC's turn to pass strong provincial legislation to protect cell phone users. [➔](#)

Marie Aspiazu is a Campaigner and Communications Specialist at OpenMedia, a non-profit organization that works to keep the internet open, affordable, and surveillance-free. For more information on digital policy issues, including free expression, access to the Internet, and online privacy, visit openmedia.org.

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Science Matters David Suzuki

ENVIRONMENT

Zeroing in on zero emissions

We're caught in a bad cycle. Global greenhouse gas emissions are still rising, causing more extreme weather events and temperature swings. Hotter than normal weather in some places and colder in others means more people are using heat and air conditioning, which creates more emissions...

According to a statistical review by oil and gas company BP, carbon emissions rose by two per cent in 2018, faster than any year since 2011, mainly because energy demand spiked higher than renewable energy deployment. Much of the increase was from China, India and the United States. In the US, industrial energy use rose, but so did demand, as the country (along with China and Russia) experienced the most days, since the 1950s, with hotter or colder than average weather. The report says it would have been worse without "extraordinary growth" in renewable energy — 14.5 per cent last year — and a modest increase in electric vehicle use; but renewables need to grow much faster to displace coal and other fossil fuels.

Canada is warming at twice the global average rate — and even more in the North. But years of inaction and political roadblocks are making it challenging to meet our Paris Agreement commitments. As one of the highest per capita emitters, we can and must do our part to help the world avoid climate chaos. The pathways to get there exist. With political will, we can employ the many available and emerging solutions.

BP chief economist Spencer Dale said shifting to low-carbon energy systems means changing the power sector, as "it is the single largest source of carbon emissions within the energy system; and it is where much of the lowest-hanging fruit lie for reducing carbon emissions over the next 20 years."

A David Suzuki Foundation report, released at a recent international clean energy conference in Vancouver, outlines 10 proven strategies for Canada to get emissions to, or near, zero by mid-century. By cleaning up the electricity sector, electrifying sectors like transportation and industry, and using energy wisely, we can avoid the worst impacts of climate disruption while reducing pollution and creating economic opportunities.

**Canada's power sector already generates
a considerable amount of energy with
hydro, wind and solar, but we aren't
yet tapping all the available options.**

Zeroing in on Emissions is the first report to come out of the Clean Power Pathways project, a collaboration between the Foundation and researchers at the universities of Victoria and Regina.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says CO2 emissions must reach zero by 2050 to avoid more than 1.5°C of temperature rise. As the BP review and *Zeroing in on Emissions* conclude, that means much faster development and deployment of cleaner energy, especially for power generation. BP also calls for fossil fuel solutions, like switching from coal to natural gas and relying on technologies like carbon capture and storage, but the Foundation's report finds energy efficiency and renewable energy will get us there faster and at a lower cost, although carbon capture is still necessary.

Canada has a head start. Our power sector already

generates a considerable amount of energy with hydro, wind and solar, but we aren't yet tapping all the available options. Saskatchewan, which has Canada's highest wind and solar energy potential, spent \$1.5 billion on carbon capture and storage to keep burning coal, with poor economic and health outcomes.

Greater electrification and renewable energy deployment means investing in energy storage, smart grids and better transmission and distribution systems. We can even use hydro dams and reservoirs to store clean energy.

Distributed energy with technologies like rooftop solar and battery storage for homes and businesses can create energy independence and reduce reliance on dirty fuels like diesel in remote communities. Other solutions include energy efficiency; designing compact, livable communities; levelling the playing field with a steadily escalating price on carbon pollution to drive innovation and clean technology; supporting vulnerable workers and communities during the transition; and shifting away from our obsession with constant growth to focus on well-being.

Further opportunities exist in agriculture, waste, land-use change and forestry, which were beyond the scope of the Foundation's report.

We have little time to get emissions under control before we lock so much CO2 and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere that temperatures will rise to catastrophic levels. Even the oil companies know this. The solutions are there; we just need the will to employ them. **K**

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Senior Editor and Writer Ian Hanington. Learn more at david Suzuki.org.



Synthetic turf management means controlling contamination going on and off the field. Before playing, wipe your sneakers on the brushes located over storm drains leading to fish habitat.

At Vancouver's Trillium Park, just a short walk west from the calming vegetable plots, trees and wildflowers of Strathcona and Cottonwood Community Gardens, stand two fenced-off sports fields covered with synthetic turf. They were installed eight years ago despite objections from concerned neighbourhood residents. Like all synthetic playing fields in Vancouver, users require a permit, removing these community common goods from general public use. The rate charged to non-profit youth organizations is \$26.12/hour compared to \$2.02/hour for a natural turf or gravel field, making fees for playing on synthetic fields likely too expensive for some families.

But exclusivity is just one questionable aspect of artificial turf. On the edges of the two playing fields, one notices black particles blending into the grass at the edge of the asphalt walkways. On closer inspection, they turn out to be crumbs of scrap tire rubber, two or three millimeters in size. They have been carried off the field by feet, wind and rain. The natural grass growing close to the Trillium Park playing field shows signs of deterioration due to turf particles that have migrated beyond the field fence. On the west side of the field, crumb debris can be found clustered in mounds up to 18 inches wide and four inches deep.

Synthetic turf

Unsupported by science as a safe solution

by Marlene Cummings on behalf of the Clinton Neighbourhood Committee

The rubber crumbs are meant to provide traction on the field and keep the blades of plastic grass separated and upright. Some 100 tons of the material are poured and raked onto a synthetic turf field to emulate the way real grass grows straight and strong towards the sun. Despite the annual practice of topping them up, the rubber crumbs only partially meet their objective: the plastic grass looks flat like a worn shag-pile carpet.

To prolong the life of the artificial playing surface, food and drinks are prohibited on the turf. Shoe scrubbers installed at the Trillium playing field, meant to clean footwear before entering the field, are located above stormwater drains clearly labeled "leads to fish habitat – do not pollute". Nevertheless, tire crumbs and plastic grass blades from the field can be seen on and around the drains waiting for the next rain to wash them down. During rains or turf-washing, the compounds and metals in crumb rubber – which include traces of phenols, lead, cadmium and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) – can leach out and flow across the synthetic surface, into groundwater, and into stormwater drains that, in turn, empty into local waterways. More information is needed about the impacts to the aquatic and sediment-dwelling life in the streams and ocean.

If you've ever watched a soccer game played on artificial turf, you can see black rubber particles ping off in all directions from the players' feet. Vancouver Coastal Health says there are no serious health risks from playing on synthetic turf, yet they have long known that hazardous materials are present in the turf materials. Recent lab tests by Total Safety Service lab in Burnaby confirmed the presence of lead in samples of crumb rubber and plastic blades from the Trillium Park field and Van-Tech Secondary School's playing field. The lab report noted that even at low levels, if the tire crumb is abraded (for example, scuffed during a soccer or field hockey match) it can produce dust containing trace amounts of lead that can be inhaled or ingested. Any amount of lead in the blood risks harmful neurological, behavioural and developmental impacts. In a letter to the Park Board last April, Dr. Bruce Lanphear of SFU and BC Children's Hospital Research Institute, urged Commissioners to put a moratorium on synthetic turf installation because of the presence of lead alone.

Clearly, players need to be concerned about protecting themselves. In a November 2015 CBC interview, Vancouver Coastal Health advised against getting the small tire

crumbs inside open wounds, or in eyes or mouths. Anyone playing on the fields would need to shake out their socks and shoes, have a shower, wash their hands, and clean any wounds. A 2015 report from Toronto Public Health recommends "providing shoe/equipment cleaning areas before exiting the field...to avoiding tracking infill material into the school or home".

On hot days, synthetic playing fields radiate mirage-like heat waves. The huge areas of green plastic and black rubber can reach temperatures of over 60°C under the blazing summer sun, creating a localized heat island that can increase sunburn, dehydration and heatstroke. Players can inhale volatile compounds released by the high temperatures into the air above the turf.



Artificial turf also produces plastic pollution. According to North Western Europe's KIMO Municipalities for Sustainable Seas, up to ten percent of the plastic grass fibres in synthetic turf annually degrade into microplastics through wear and tear. Again, rain can eventually carry these particles down storm drains and into marine habitat where they are consumed by fish and shellfish. In marine organisms, microplastics can lead to reduced nutritional uptake, damaged organs, and impaired reproduction. Working their way up the food chain, microplastics enter our bodies, the repercussions of which we are only beginning to understand.

Where does all this material go when a synthetic playing field inevitably comes to its unnatural end? Park Board staff confirm that after a synthetic field's average eight-year lifespan, the crumb rubber and plastic grass would likely be deposited in a landfill.

There are about a dozen synthetic turf fields in Vancouver, which represents a lot of rubber and plastic waste. The Park Board has plans to install another at Sir Winston Churchill School and are looking at other public sport fields like Clinton Park, despite strong neighbourhood pushback.

None of this fits with Vancouver's ambition to be the Greenest City, or with the overarching need to protect the environment and deal with the climate emergency. There are climate impacts to consider: synthetic turf is a Life-cycle GHG Emitter of 108.2 tons CO2 equivalent over 10 years compared to a grass sport field that acts like a carbon sink to remove and store 16.9 cont'd next page...

...*Synthetic continued*

tons CO2 equivalent over the same period. In addition, living grass can remove pollutants from the air, cool the playing surface and air above, and filter rainwater, all of which help in the fight against climate change.

Over the past decade or so, several waves of protest by concerned residents and parents have been dampened by health and administrative authorities who have repeatedly said that the toxic chemicals in synthetic turf pose no danger. Most municipalities have continued installing synthetic turf despite the lack of data on risks through the exposure pathways of ingestion, skin contact, inhalation, and leachate. Nevertheless, more studies are being pub-

lished on the risks to human and environmental health from exposure to synthetic turf plastic and recycled crumb rubber infill materials. We need to hit the pause button on synthetic turf, now.

The Vancouver Park Board must embrace new scientific evidence and safeguard our City's common land. This should start with the Park Board putting a moratorium on new synthetic turf installations, and immediate remediation of existing crumb rubber sport fields. The Park Board also needs to shift the mandate of the Advisory Committee from planning the next synthetic field to planning for truly green and healthy sport fields and parks – and in collaboration with concerned residents. ◀

Marlene Cummings holds an MSc in Environmental Planning and is a member of the Clinton Neighbourhood Committee in Vancouver. For more information, go to: saveourplayingfields.com. To support efforts to keep Vancouver's public sport fields and parks healthy and accessible for all, please contact: clintonpark2018@gmail.com

TAKE ACTION

Let the Vancouver Park Board Commissioners know you do not want synthetic turf in public parks, sport fields, or schoolyards. Email them at PBcommissioners@vancouver.ca or call 604-257-8439 to make an appointment with a Commissioner to share your concerns..

...*Surveillance from pg. 9*

the behavior that will occur in these companies by understanding the economic logic. That doesn't mean that every individual in the organization actually even understands these economic imperatives or what they're doing. But the economic imperatives, once you grasp them, predict the behavior.

In the same way, I quote Andy Bosworth's amazing internal memo, which is the perfect description of what I call radical indifference. "Connectivity equals economic growth. We connect, we grow. We connect, someone uses our connection to pull off a terrorist plot, that's too bad. But we continue connecting, because connection is growth. We connect, some people find each other and fall in love, marry, live happily ever after, that's great. We continue to connect. No matter what,

we connect." This is the idea of radical indifference.

It's not just Google, it's not just Facebook, which, by the way, is the second category error, that this is just related to a couple of big companies. The CEO of Ford Motor, who says, we want PEs like Google and Facebook. We want market cap like Google and Facebook. Nobody wants to buy cars anymore on planet Earth. What are we going to do? Oh, I know. Let's sell data. We have 100 million people driving around in Ford cars. Let's get all the data from that. Let's put it together with the data from Ford Credit, where, he says, we already know everything about you. Then we're returning with the big boys, we're up there. Who wouldn't want to source predictive data from Ford Motor? This is an economic logic, and it's transform-

ing industry after industry. We see it in insurance, we see it in finance, we see it in health, we see it in education. This is not about a planet suddenly gone evil.

These are economic imperatives. Normal people. It's not like every bad person went over there to work on surveillance capitalism. This is all people like us caught up in an economic logic that is unprecedented, that has not been named,

that has barely been recognized even by the people who are practicing it. ◀

Shoshana Zuboff is professor emerita at the Harvard Business School. She is the author of *In the Age of the Smart Machine* and *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. This article was transcribed by **David Barsamian**, founder & Director of **Alternative Radio** airing on Vancouver Co-op Radio CFRO-FM (100.5), Tues, noon-1pm. www.alternativeradio.org

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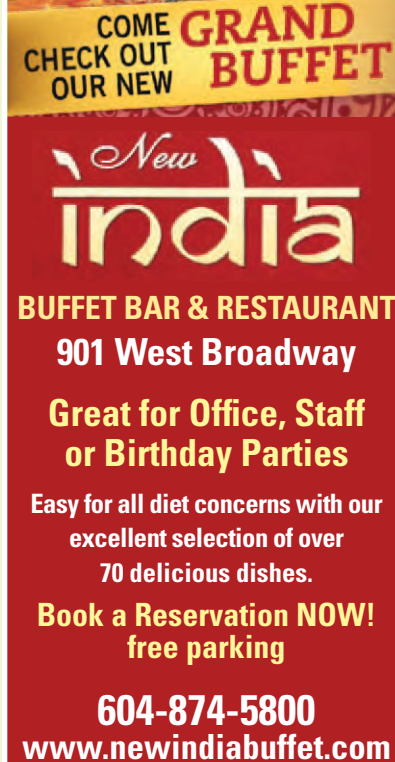
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Scalar Light: Latest Biofield Enhancement Technology: Supporting immunity & cellular nutrition. Free seminar 6:30-9:30 pm. Centre for Peace, 1825 W. 16th Ave., Vancouver. www.totalvitalitycentre.com RSVP help@totalvitalitycentre.com 604 428 8682

JUL 18

Scalar Light: Latest Biofield Enhancement Technology: Supporting immunity & cellular nutrition. Free seminar 6:30-9:30 pm. Total Vitality Centre, 318 Gilmore Ave., Burnaby. www.totalvitalitycentre.com RSVP help@totalvitalitycentre.com 604 428 8682

JUL 19

Basic Holistic Foot Reflexology Certificate Training Course. 7 pm; Course \$395 + gst. 3261 Heather Street, Vancouver. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JUL 27

Stop 5G Wireless Protest – Gathering at 2:00 pm, Saturday, July 27th immediately south of Science World near bike path bend west of Quebec Street at Terminal Ave. For more info, see: www.CETH.ca.

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AUG 3 - 6

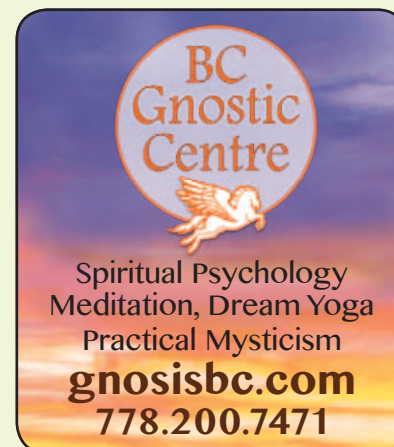
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AUG 17

Vesanto Melina: Snackluck & meet 11 y.o. environmental activist Kaiha Juuj. 7 pm. Vancouver Co-Housing. Details: www.meetup.com/MeatlessMeetup/events/

AUG 23

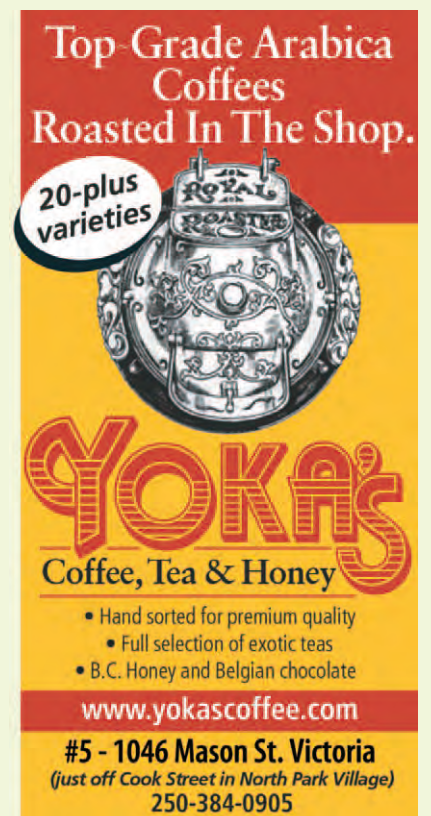
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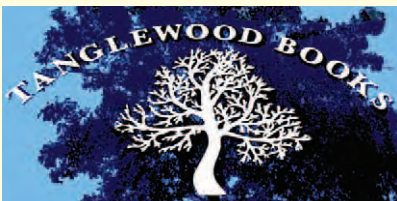
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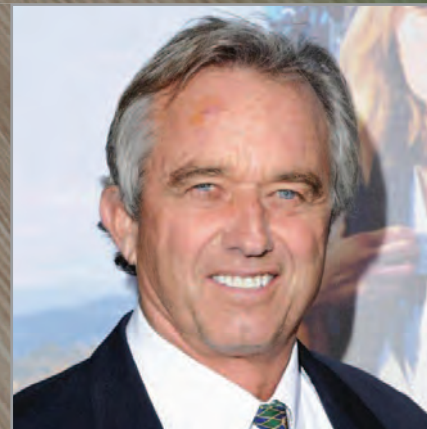
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